



EOC Response Team Ready For Emergencies

*Story and photo by Sr Airman Christopher Stoltz
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs*

As an old English proverb quotes, "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst." For some, this is but a simple quote. For the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) Emergency Management Emergency Operations Center, this is their culture.

JBPHH Emergency Management hosted a week of training from Feb. 11 to 14 for the JBPHH Emergency Operations Center Incident Management Team (EOC-IMT). Instructors from the CNIC Shore Force Training Center taught the course over three and a half days to 22 students from various JBPHH codes and tenant organizations.



The class included medical, security, safety, emergency management and various other specialists assigned to the JBPHH Emergency Operations Center. Each student learned how to properly serve as a member of an installation's EOC IMT during an emergency through a series of practical application classroom exercises, which utilize student working groups to apply the knowledge gained during lectures. During exercises, students in the IMT are broken into common emergency support functions under the general areas of operations, logistics and plans.

"They (the students) are given a practical scenario of an on-base emergency where they are forced to realistically lead, brief, coordinate and plan," said Daniel T. DuBois, JBPHH Emergency Management Officer. "Each day, classroom instruction is followed by an EOC exercise that gets progressively complex as the course progresses."

According to DuBois, exercises encompass an all-hazard approach from earthquake, tsunami or hurricane natural disasters to manmade events, such as a hazardous materials spill or an active shooter. All are timely and plausible and designed to stress the EOC-IMT.

The EOC is the command and control point for Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for response and recovery operations after any man-made or natural disaster and as a support center during major events at JBPHH including POTUS visits, base concerts, 4th of July and other events of major significance.



The EOC-IMT is staffed by a combination of active duty Air Force, Navy and civilian personnel from 18 support units within Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam that are capable of conducting 24/7 support operations. The EOC functions as a conduit of response coordination between units including fire, security, port operations, air operations, logistics, mass care and public affairs. Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam's EOC-IMT also combines the efforts of Air Force, Navy and civilian personnel.

"The EOC is important because it provides the joint base commander and other emergency operations control centers around JBPHH with a common operating picture," said DuBois. "It also enables focus of effort for the response recovery efforts during natural and manmade disasters."

DuBois explained that this common operating picture allows the incident management team to communicate quickly and effectively, reducing response time to any incident that may occur. It also allows for these team members to quickly disseminate information to their reporting officials back at their main office.

"The EOC is usually in standby status," said DuBois. "But it can be fully activated and engaged for emergency response duties within minutes."

Such a quick response time to any emergency or incident isn't by luck; it takes practice. DuBois and the rest of the emergency operations center staff provide monthly training sessions for the EOC-IMT, in conjunction with quarterly exercises--all to help keep the IMT vigilant.

